

STATEMENT for the APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE, March 22, 2013 at 10:00 am

Good Morning, Senator Harp, Representative Walker and members of the Appropriations Committee.

My name is Sylvester L. Salcedo. I'm an attorney, and a magistrate. I live in Orange, but my law practice has been based in Bridgeport for the past ten years.

Today I join my fellow magistrates to ask for your support of Senator Crisco's Senate Bill # 8.

I am honored to have been selected and appointed as a magistrate for small claims and motor vehicle matters in June, 2010. I believe that serving as a magistrate in our state is an honor that I equate to my military service in the U. S. Navy from 1979 to 1999 as a naval officer. I enjoy the work and challenge of every session in every court where I am privilege to sit.

However, the magistrates in this state have not been considered for, nor granted, a pay raise in about 30 years. I believe it is time to evaluate the dedication and contributions that many magistrates have made in the past three decades without additional compensation. While state deficits and surpluses may ebb and flow, the fact that magistrates are the only remaining group of state workers who have not been considered for an increased in their compensation raises an issue recognition and appreciation of that work for the citizens of this state.

A base rate of \$150.00 per session set in 1985 as it remains now is equivalent to about \$70.00 in today's values. Combined that with added expenses related to travel mileage and at times, parking fees, the current compensation level is misaligned compared to the increases in the complexity of the workload. In the meantime, the court filing fees for small claims matters has risen from \$35 to \$90 today, and the jurisdictional limits have likewise risen from \$2,500.00 to \$5,000.00. Yet, the magistrates' compensation has remained unchanged.

Accordingly, I ask all of you to support most enthusiastically Senator Crisco's bill to consider an increase in the compensation for our magistrates. I speak on behalf of my fellow magistrates, some who are retired, and many others like me who are still in the active practice of law, who try to balance a heavy schedule to continue to serve the citizens of this state for whom we are the most visible face of the judicial system in this state.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Very Respectfully,

Sylvester L. Salcedo, Esq

(203) 650-01118, email: ssalcedo98@aol.com